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Letter dated 24 March 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to forward herewith a letter from my Government in connection with the report of the Panel of Experts on violations of Security Council sanctions against the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) (S/2000/203, annex I), in particular paragraph 67 thereof, in which Uganda is alleged to have been involved in facilitating the refuelling of UNITA aircraft (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated to members of the Security Council for their additional information and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Fred **Beyendeza**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

Letter from the Government of Uganda regarding the report of the Panel of Experts on violations of Security Council sanctions against the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA)

The report just published by the Panel of Experts on violations of Security Council sanctions against the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) has made serious and unfounded allegations that planes sometimes refuelled at Entebbe, Uganda, on their way to and from Andulo, Angola.

The Government of Uganda would like to state categorically that the allegation is not only false but unfounded. On 16 February of this year, the Panel of Experts visited Uganda to investigate allegations of Uganda's cooperation with UNITA in contravention of United Nations sanctions. The Panel of Experts held exhaustive discussions with Uganda government officials. It was explained to the Panel of Experts that Uganda has only one international airport at Entebbe, and that the airport at Entebbe is open to and used by many aircraft and that it is impossible to conduct secret flights, let alone refuelling exercises, without being noticed.

The Government is therefore surprised that the Panel went ahead and included this unfounded allegation in their report. The inclusion of such falsehood brings into question the seriousness of the whole exercise.

Even before the panel visited Uganda, the First Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of Foreign Affairs, concerned about the allegations of Uganda's assistance to UNITA to violate sanctions, had in February 1999 written to the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and copied the letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, seeking their indulgence in having the allegation verified.

The Panel of Experts visited Uganda for only one day even though it was invited to stay longer so as to enable it to do a thorough job. Moreover, a request by the Government of Uganda for details of an alleged fax message to the President of Zambia from Uganda requesting his intervention in order to secure the release of an impounded aircraft suspected of ferrying contraband to UNITA has not been substantiated to date.

The Government of Uganda has cooperated with Angolan officials who came to the country and had the opportunity to travel to different parts in which they had an interest but who did not turn up any incriminating evidence.

The Government of Uganda categorically denies any dealings with the UNITA organization, and states that at no time did it act in such a manner as to contravene sanctions imposed on UNITA by the United Nations.

(*Signed*) Ralph W. **Ochan**
Permanent Secretary